PAPER FOR ECONOMICS 180

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1. American Federationist, from the months October 1942 to August 1943 inclusive.

2. C.I.O. Union News Service, from the months October 1942 to August 1943 inclusive.

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4. Teamster, from October 1942 to August 1943 inclusive.

5. Progressive Miner, from March to August inclusive.

Can unions successfully survive the coming "winter" of the American labor movement? That question of course assumes that hard times are in store for liberalism and only questions the ability of the labor movement to emerge from the winter intact.

Already the formidable cool winds of autumn have frosted public sentiment or liberal issues. Labor, always the functional vanguard of liberalism is in a difficult position today. Under the guise and necessity of a war economy labor has faced a curtailment of its operating power. It must both contribute its all-out effort to the war (in which idealogically labor is in complete accord) and yet struggle to maintain not only its peripheral functions but the core of unionism -- an <u>independent</u> status on decisions of policy toward strikes, picket lines, collective bargaining, political activity and matters of internal organization.

The continual sniping at labor, intentional or otherwise, through the press, radio and legislatures has occurred at a strategic time in American labor history. During the depression unionism, because of the recognition and support of the New Deal, spread through the country like wild fire. Union leaders took advantage of a good psychological moment and pressed their demands. In the heat of the new struggle,

however, attitudes crystallized. Deep-seated emotional antipathies were formed among both labor and management, and in the public who constituted the grandstand for the organizational battle. Fears and reckless attitudes replaced well-considered reasonable judgments. It was a period of emotional upheaval.

As the decade of the 30's drew to a close, a saner attitude became evident. Labor unions began to be accepted as an annex to our industrial economy. They were a force to be reckoned with, not blinked at. Labor, also was "growing up", and evidenced a desire to achieve its goals in a reasonable fair manner. Unions, particularly the older trade unions, desired to work with the system of private enterprise, rather than against it. However, when United States declared war on December 7 great blocks of the American public had not forgotten their bitterness. The phrases of a Pegler or Kaltenborn were still popular. Every strike was another indication that "labor can't be trusted. They always want more and more."

Besides the historical factor of adolescence of unionism another factor contributes to the psychological unpreparedness of unions to resist reactionary onslaughts at this time. With the stimulus to industry by the war, floods of workers, many of them new recruits, found employment in unionized shops. This new blood presented problems in organizational strategy, union discipline and political education. A new

job psychology of "just a job to make money during the war", "I have to do my part" and "I'll quit when my husband returns" intruded into the shop atmosphere. The new "job-consciousness-for-the-duration" blended with the "job-consciousness-for-a-life-time". It is a strange brew for unions to stir. Factional disputes concerning wage increases, strikes, collective bargaining agreements, and union membership policies are apt to develop along those lines, with a war-consciousness cutting across both sides.

This tendency for a lack of cohesiveness in unions or internal policies was even more evident on political issues, viz. prior to elections of 1942. An alert fighting union leadership, like the C.I.O., had apparently not translated that spirit into its membership. Whatever the reasons -- time limitation, "green" union membership, political indifference, lack of education -- the unions were not sufficiently articulate in the last Congressional and state elections to put in their men -- administration all-out representatives. The wave of reaction had set in and the unions found they could not rally political support as easily as they could collect dues.

One explanation might be the fallacy of numbers. Perhaps that was a hangover from the previous organizational drunk between the A.F. of L. and C.I.O. Quantity and quality are never necessary reciprocals. There is always an optimum point. Labor leaders failed to understand that solidarity

depends on more than numbers. The opposition in its flanking attacks has overlooked numbers and instead relied upon deeprooted middle-class prejudices and upon the shackles of a war situation. The winter is near at hand, and is labor prepared?

A study of the issues which were of concern to labor from October 1942 to October 1943 reveals interesting trends and sidelights. The purpose of the study was to get the attitudes and policies of unions, particularly C.I.O. toward these issues and then to delineate the symptoms for the future. My contention is that the prime condition is degree of staying power among unions, which is contingent upon (1) type of leadership, (2) dependent or independent status of unions, (3) degree of political wisdom, and (4) organizational maturity, and (5) degree of solidarity among labor movement.

A positive scoring on the resistance power of labor unions would, in my opinion, be of great importance in determining the strength of the opposition and the outcome of the struggle.

The information gleaned from the labor union press of C.I.O. and A.F. of L. focused upon the issue of wage and price stabilization.

PRICE AND WAGE STABILIZATION

Both the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organization have followed parallel lines in their attitude toward this issue since the President's hold-the-line order of October 2, 1942. This united front policy is as much the result of cooperation between the leadership of the two unions as due to the fact that their existence as unions presents common problems of stabilized wages and increased costs of living.

Throughout the papers, the issues of OPA control, National War Labor Board, Farm Bloc, manpower shortage, tax bill influence the unions' position on the problem of price and wage stabilization. Inflationary controls and Equality of Sacrifice are the two concepts that are balanced on the teeter-totter. It is thus an objective matter of budgeting more money for food and less for incidentals, and the subjective matter of resenting the Jones' (viz. big business and the farmers) who are doing you one better.

In the October 2, 1942 issue of the C.I.O. Union News Service an editorial declares, "The shameful mishandling of the President's seven-point program reveals all-tee-many politicians from all parts who are more concerned with preserving the paunches of the over-stuffed than with building

the muscles and fighting stamina of the whole nation.

"Their idea of war taxation is to make the people give until it hurts the little fellow who squeewks least."

Joseph Salerno, president of the Massachusetts State Industrial Union Council, speaking before the United Shoe Workers of America Convention, stressed "that in supporting President Roosevelt's stabilization program the C.I.O. does not advocate wage freezing, but believes that adjustments in substandard wages should be made immediately."[1]

In an editorial -- November 6 -- on the Wartime Convention of C.I.O., it was clearly pointed out that "Where, in the past collective bargaining, might directly concern only the workers and employers in a particular industry or plant, now nearly every issue raised is tied in with national governmental policy and must, in the last analysis, be determined by the war interests of the whole American people.

"The C.I.O. has subordinated all other considerations to winning the war. It has done so because this is the desire of millions of workers for whom it speaks; because the interests of labor and our whole country are one and identical in this crisis; and because labor's freedom and its very life depend upon victory over the Axis."

Included in a resolution adopted unanimously at the C.I.O. National Convention at Boston in November was the

1 Union News Service, October 9.

paragraph on: "A wage and rationing program aimed at providing workers with all the necessities of food, shelter and clothing to give them the highest possible efficiency in the factories"; and a paragraph on "equal representation for labor in this total war; elimination of labor advisory committees and the placement of labor representatives in all the administrative agencies which make and execute our war policies -- and at every level."

The International Teamster wholeheartedly endorses the stabilization program and the war effort.

In an editorial on Work or Fight in the October issue it states: "If the government can compel a man to fight it can certainly compel him to work. And it can prescribe the wages and hours and the conditions of employment. This is not Fascism. It is self-preservation.

"A man who won't work to save other men from dying is unworthy of his membership in any American labor union."

Lester M. Hunt in the same issue of Teamster writes, "Labor's great fear of wage stabilization has been that its wages would be pegged while farm prices would not. If the cost of living is controlled, then labor can get by for the duration of the war, which is all anybody ought to expect out of this crisis.

"All of labor, however, must forget about any pay raises above the stabilization levels which are figured on the increase in the cost of living up to this time."

In November 1942 Hunt writes in the Teamster: "The question of prices rests to a great degree on the wages of labor and so does the question of profits. Therefore Byrnes will have authority over our pay envelopes. An encouraging indication of the fairness with which the government intends to spread the burdens of total war is its intention to peg large incomes at $25,000 a year....

"It is to keep those bayonets plunging at the heart of infamy, slavery and aggression that we tighten our belts and welcome Byrnes to a seat at the dinner table."

In December President Tobin declared before the senate subcommittee on legislation concerning labor draft: "If the profits from investments were dispensed with during the period of the war, as they are in England, we might have less conflict as to paying the worker the wage he is at present receiving if he is compelled to change from one employment to another."[2] This advice reveals the close relation between wages, prices and our entire economy including the knotty problem of manpower. For many months the War Labor Board has had to deal with employers asking for increases in their wage rates in order to prevent a labor migration to a better paid industries. Wage stabilization is intricately related with a seller's labor market.

2 International Teamster, December 1942.

The International Association of Machinists are much more skeptical about the motives of OPA administrators and the necessity for wage stabilization than the Teamster. Charles M. Kelly in his column Your Washington Reporter of the Teamster, October 1942, writes: "Are Leon Henderson and others who are crusading against the nation's workers really sincere in their insistance that unless a ceiling is place over wages the nation will go to the dogs?.....

"Just about the worst thing that could happen would be to follow Henderson's advice and freeze wages. And when rationing is adopted, why is it not enforced with strict impartiality?"

In the November 1942 Machinist H. W. Brown, international president writes: "There must be no reluctance on the part of our members to cooperate, if and when called upon by management, for observing the President's Executive Order of October 2. I say this because we are at war, and therefore, Orders by the Commander-in-Chief must be complied with."

Eric Peterson, the Vice-President editorializes: "It didn't take a certain type of employer long to construe the stabilization order to mean 'wage freezing', and as a result there has been an alarming increase in disputes, which eventually must be handled by the War Labor Board.

"The pattern of total war as it affects this nation is being revealed more and more clearly and unless the labor movement becomes more militant in protection of its

rights, we may soon find that all semblance of collective bargaining has disappeared."[3]

Mr. Peterson has delineated an important but not obvious issue in the entire wage problem: that of allowing the War Labor Board to handle all wage adjustments, increases etc. instead of going through the collective bargaining machinery. This situation is aggravated by the war and the desire of both labor and employers to expedite wage settlements rather than go through the established channels. Paternalistic bureaucracy settling labor management affairs is fraught with potential dangers. An organism ceases to live through atrophy. Is that the trend in collective bargaining machinery?

President Phillip Murray of the C.I.O. declared in a New Year's Message: "The C.I.O. will work in 1943 for a universal system of democratic rationing, so all may have their fair share of available goods; for effective price control, particularly over living necessities; and for a win-the-war tax program that will adequately finance the supplying of our armed forces, will prevent inflation, will plug loopholes through which wealth has avoided paying its full share, will distribute the tax burden according to ability to pay and will not deprive low-income groups of the goods they must have for healthy activity."[4]

3 Machinists Monthly Journal, November 1942.
4 C.I.O. Union Service, December 23.

The recommendations fors stabilization of wages of Southern California Aircraft workers were hailed by the leaders of the United Auto Workers Union as a "basic pattern for the constructive solution to the labor-management problems which have so long beset the West Coast aircraft industry."[5]

The recommendations set minimum rates of 80 cents an hour for all workers in the industry four months as longer and established for the first time in the industry's history an equitable pay scale covering the 8 major California air plants.

Murray in a speech to special legislative conference in Washington, January 8, 1943, advised that a "tax program reach more deeply into big profits and inflated incomes, must close present loopholes and enforce the desired $25,000 net income level. Any form of sales tax, however labelled, must be avoided as a direct threat to workers' health and efficiency and consequently to war production." He also spoke concerning union conditions. "Labor must be secured in its present wage and other union conditions and must be assured the continued opportunity to adjust inequalities. This is more than a matter of justice. It is a vital part of strengthening the national economy and promoting war production. Workers cannot work at top efficiency if they are distracted by a recurring need to protect their living

5 C.I.O. Union Service, January 1.

standards and working conditions."

The C.I.O. Executive Board in February declared that the breakdown in the President's seven-point program was due to Congress and government officials who have failed to effectuate the remaining portions of the economic stabilization policy. They asked that,

> "1. Immediate and universal price control and rationing to guarantee enough food and other necessities to all the people, plus a win-the-war tax bill that would ensure workers enough income to take up their ration tickets and maintain health and efficiency.
>
> "2. Wage stabilization, not job freezing to strengthen the morale and health of the workers to guarantee maximum production."[6]

The unions were not completely without initiative in presenting plans to aid in stabilizing the war economy. The C.I.O. United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers presented a proposal "to defer cash wage increase demands due for negotiation next month in favor of a 'special fund' to cover living cost increases between May 15, 1942 and May 15, 1943, while government agencies undertake a real offensive on price control, rationing, and a win-the-war tax program.

"If this real stabilization has been achieved by August 15, the special fund 'shall be paid to the Treasury of the United States in exchange for war bonds' to be distributed to the workers.

6 C.I.O. Union Service, February 6, 1943.

"If on the contrary, August 15 finds our national economy in the same state of disorganization as now, and finds our government agencies still unable to control the situation...the increase will be paid in money, to enable the working men and women to maintain their production efficiency."[7]

In New York the Executive Board of the C.I.O. United Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employees adopted a program calling for total rationing, rigid price control, an end to the 'Little Steel' wage formula to meet living costs increases, an adequate tax program, increase health services and manpower utilization.[8] This policy is later reiterated by many C.I.O. and A.F. of La. unions throughout the country as the gap between rising prices and 'stabilized' wages increases.

In March Murray charged that "recent decisions of the National War Labor Board in the meat packing industry and the West Coast aircraft industry are a direct violation of the national wage stabilization policy of the government."

More specifically he declared that

> "1. A WLB allowance of a 15% wage increase (Little Steel Formula) does not compensate for the loss in real wages, occasioned by a 22% rise in the cost of living.
>
> "2. Encouragement should be given to wage policies which result in increased with corresponding increased earnings for

7 C.I.O. Union Service, February 26.
8 Ibid., February 26.

> workers, with careful protection to assure that increased production does not result merely in inflated profits for industry or lack of employment."

Murray further stated that "the workers in those industries are suffering under very severe inequalities and inequities.... Wage adjustments to meet these living problems could not possibly have any inflationary effect -- while a failure to justly meet a situation will have a devastating impact upon morale, health and productive efficiency of the workers."[9]

The tone of cooperation toward a stabilization program as outlined by the government is now changing to a hold-labor's line on wage stabilization. Things are getting out of line and labor leaders are trying to resist thrusts and to maintain labor's position.

Len de Caux, communist columnist for the C.I.O. News, resorts to the workers prejudice of the other fellow "beating his time." He states, "The war profits of the three large steel companies alone in the last three years, after taxes and after extravagant depreciation reserves will amount to about half a billion dollars.

"The steel workers' wages have been kept down by the Little Steel formula. But not so the wages of Eugene Grace, president of Bethelehem Steel. He's had a nice little wage boost of $60,000....from $478,144 a year in 1940 to

9 C.I.O. Union Service, March 19, 1943.

$537,724 in 1942."[10]

Specific proposals to increase the effectiveness of OPA rationing regulations and thus protect the consumer's income and health were cited in the April 3 issue of the C.I.O. News. Blaming the OPA for not getting tougher toward the profits of minority business interests that obstruct real price control, the editorial suggested, "Price control of canned goods will certainly break down if profiteers are permitted to pass off inferior quality foods at top ceiling prices for the highest quality... Labor demands stiff price control with grade labeling and over-all rationing -- not Farm bloc appeasement of profiteers."

Your Washington Reporter in the May 1943 Teamster stated, "Those who are really worried about inflation should direct their attention to income above $3,000, as emphasized in the OPA reports. This group represents but 26% of the families and single individuals in the country, yet last year it had 51.8% of the income and got 48.1% of all goods and services."

The pressure of the farm bloc to raise parity prices became a bone of contention for the labor unions who were trying to prevent prices from rising, particularly food costs, in order to keep real wages in line with the Little Steel Formula. Labor leaders, however, made an effort to distinguish between the farm bloc and the small farmers who

10 C.I.O. Union Service, March 26, 1943.

they claimed were not responsible for the pressure to jockey farm prices. Labor's attacks were directed against the 'business' farmers rather than the farmer in general.

In the April 17 News Service an article stated: "The C.I.O. joins with the National Farmers' Union in demanding more funds for F.S.A. and more aid to the millions of small and working farmers for all-out food production.

"It is now of the utmost importance that our affiliated unions and membership extend the fullest support to this action (April 7 order) taken by the President in order to impress Mr. Prentiss Brown, price administrator and Mr. Chester Davis, administrator of food production and distribution with the absolute need for interpreting the Executive Order as an order to reduce prices to the levels which prevailed on September 15, 1942."

The C.I.O. Cannery and Agricultural Workers' President Donald Henderson voiced opposition to the Fulmer Bankhead and Pace Bills, declaring "these bills do not get at the heart of the food problem. They freeze the peacetime status which was based on a huge farm labor surplus, 1/3 of which will remain tied to non-essential crops."[11] On May 22 the C.I.O. Cannery and Agricultural workers released a 'United Nations Food Plan' to handle the food

11 C.I.O. Union Service, April 24.

shortage. They said, "The blame for shortage lies squarely on the refusal of Congress, the government agencies and the farm-bloc to give up farming-as-usual and turn to farming for victory. The plan included:

"1. Conversion of agricultural from non-essential crops to victory crops.

"2. Full use of land, manpower and other farm resources now badly wasted.

"3. Incentive payments where needed to boost output.

"4. Full use of the United Nations food resources to save manpower, shipping and other resources needed for war."

In the American Federationist for May, 1943, George Meany in an article on "War Production and Food Prices" states: "The common people of the nation don't want food prices held at their present fatastic levels, nor will we be satisfied with minor reductions. What we want is the rolling back of food prices all along the line and we want them rolled back to the levels of May, 1942 -- one year ago." He stresses in the article that labor favors economic stabilization, and does not want a race between wages and prices that would end only in disaster. "But", Meany states, "that economic stabilization must be applied with even-handed justice to both sides of the line. This cannot be done until prices are rolled back sufficiently so that they are again within reach of the wage-earners' pay envelope.

"How can these two million civil servants do their important job on a hold-the-present line price basis?

The line must go back."

In December of 1942 Dan Tobin testifying before the Senate subcommittee on legislation concerning labor draft stated: "As in Britain, our labor people believe that under no circumstances should men from the farms of our nation be allowed to either enlist, be subject to the draft or go into employments."[12]

And in February Lester Hunt in an article The Farm Bloc Burps said, "The farm bloc wants to boost the prices of food, reduce the quantity of food and put the entire nation at its mercy in the face of the greatest food shortage in American history....

"Farm income has risen 600% higher than the prices the farmer pays but the farm bloc claims the food price ceilings must be blasted to permit farm income to rise still higher."[13]

An article in the July American Federationist explains "What Price Subsidies?" Because of the adept way the issue is handled I prefer to quote at length rather than rephrase in my own words. "To eliminate this disparity between frozen wages and increased cost of living, labor did not demand a proportionate increase in all wages. It insisted instead that the cost of living be reduced to at least the September, 1942 level and preferably to the May, 1942 level to reestablish a balance between wages and cost of living.

12 Teamster, December 1942.
13 Ibid., February 1943.

To achieve a rollback in the cost of living, labor proposed a program of selective subsidies.

"On June 3 the Combined War Labor Board stated to the President labor's views on the inflation crisis. Top spokesmen of the American workers said to the President:

> "1. Direct a genuine roll-back of prices of food and other costs of living items to May, 1942, levels to be completed not later than July 15, 1943.
>
> "2. Authorize immediate utilization of available funds to launch an extensive program of subsidies to effect such rollback and address an insistent message to Congress demanding authorization of further subsidy funds.
>
> "3. Request Congress for appropriation of funds sufficient for general and speedy enforcement of price control and rationing and direct the OPA to set up nationwide machinery to insure such enforcement.

"A subsidy paid to a producer as a processor who cannot reduce the price can continue to receive a reasonable return. Firms whose costs are relatively lower, whose relative position is more advantageous can absorb a price reduction without any subsidy at all.

"Furthermore, if prices, and with them the cost of living are permitted to rise and a balance between wages and prices is to be preserved, wages must eventually go up also. This means that the initial price rise in the price of one commodity will soon multiply the pressure for a further price increase not only on the commodity in question but also on

all other commodities."

The C.I.O. Union News Service of June 12 includes a story further indicating labor's position on the 'roll-back'. "Donald Montgomery, UAW-CIO consumer counsel, Jack Zucker for the United Shoe Workers, Hoyt Haddock for the CIO maritime unions and Don Henderson for the Cannery and Agricultural workers in appearing before a legislative committee were emphatic in pointing out that the CIO does not want a rollback at the expense of farmers or of processors, and that the only way the rollback can be accomplished is through the use of subsidy payments."

The position of the CIO leaders toward a roll-back became more insistent with the passing of months. Labor had taken the position that a roll-back was the only alternative to reestablish the balance between wages and prices -- if inflation was to be avoided.

Before the Congressional Committee to Protect the Consumer Conference at which 400 delegates attended, Phillip Murray stated that "If Congress does not pass legislation by July 15 to insure an immediate rollback of prices labor will be compelled to demand that wages be increased."[14] He warned that the internal economy of the nation is disintegrating.

14 CIO Union News Service, June 26.

Although during the late spring and summer the issue of roll-back of prices was paramount in labor's attitude toward economic stabilization program other factors concerning stabilization continued to harass them; the rigid application of the Little Steel formula, the selected rationing policy of OPA, the reliance upon investigation of wage rate changes rather than cost of living increases in determined wage rates, issue of the miners' strike for portal-to-portal pay, and job freezing.

On April 24 the CIO Union News carried an article on McNutt's manpower order. It stated that, "McNutt has now imposed a shameful restriction on these agreements in critical areas -- namely that a worker may not change jobs because his pay is 'substantially less than that prevailing in the same or substantially similar work.' This means freezing workers to sweated jobs at substandard wages, regardless of the effect on labor morale and production.

"CIO President Philip Murray called upon Chairman Paul V. McNutt of the War Manpower Commission to replace his recent job freezing directive with a policy 'whereby economic stabilization will be governed solely through the operation of joint labor-management stabilization agreements', with proper safeguards for labor."

CIO Gets Manpower To Save Tomato Pack reads the headline in the August 7 issue of the Union News. Some 500 Florida citrus workers, all members of the United Cannery,

Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers had arrived in New Jersey to help process the tomato pack at the Campbell Soup. This suggestion to relieve manpower shortage came from the Campbell Soup 'labor-management' committee.

The various government bureaus have had their share of criticism from labor, and much of it is directed against the bottlenecks, delays and red tape that arise in getting action on wage problems. On May 8 the CIO Union News printed this story. "The CIO Executive Board this week urged that Economic Stabilization Director James F. Byrnes be stripped of the power to 'censor' wage increases recommended by the National War Labor Board to eliminate gross inequities or to aid in the effective prosecution of the war."

On May 22 the Union News stated "At its Cleveland board meeting the CIO pointed out that Byrnes' directive imposes restrictions on the Board whereby present going rates for any occupation within any labor market area will not be subject to change, regardless of prevailing inequalities.

"This discrimination will still continue', the CIO said, 'in that workers of the same company or within the same industry doing substantially the same kind of work will because of many reasons, such as race, sex or employer discrimination, be paid different wages.'"

Most labor leaders were strongly in favor of the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill to create an Office of War Mobilization. UAW leaders called for passage of the bill in order to end

confusion, overlapping and lack of central planning.[15]

However, there was criticism of the newly established machinery. "That is the failure to give labor representation." The June 5 issue of the Union News said, "War mobilization cannot be complete or effective unless labor is given an important role in formulating the policies of a body like OWM."

An indication of the problems arising from wage case delays before War Labor Board is Tobin's advice to Teamster unions who were impatient and annoyed. "I do, however, strongly recommend that all of the old procedure continue. That is, meet your employers and try to reach an agreement or understanding instead of going before the War Labor Board." [16]

An editorial in the April, 1943 issue of the Machinists treats the same problem. "Organized labor through its chosen representatives was a party to the creation of the Board, and agreed to abide by its decisions. We must continue to do so, because, notwithstanding that some of the decisions of the Boardhave been disappointing to Labor, the fact remains that the Board has rendered an outstanding service to the Nation during the first year of its existence. Therefore, we sincerely hope that those who have failed to secure from the Board all that was asked for, will accept

15 CIO Union News Service, May 22.
16 Teamster, May 1943.

the decisions and continue at work, producing to the limit of their capacity those things needed for the successful prosecution of the war."

The most spectacular aspect of the stabilization program arose when John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers struck for $2 per day wage increase. Although much of labor sympathized with the cause of the miners, aware of their own situation in regard to 'stabilized' wages and rising costs of living, there was criticism and fear of public reaction to Lewis.

The Teamster of June, 1943 stated, "Is John L. Lewis aware that if the miners are given the $2-a day wage increase which he seeks for them that they and all other working persons will lose much more than $2 a day through inflation that would be an inevitable result of the giving of such a wage increase? Does he realize that he is organized labor's greatest enemy?"

The CIO Union News Service was more sympathetic to the cause of the miners than A.F. of L. Unions. "In supporting the miners' grievances, the CIO urged the War Labor Board to give the UMW, 'an equitable wage adjustment' and at the same time condemned strikes when our country is at war' and which also 'furnish aid and comfort to all of labor's enemies in and out of Congress and endanger the very life of Labor organization through vicious anti-labor legislation.'"

SUMMARY: Labor's reaction to the Price and Wage Stabilization program became increasingly negative as the months rolled by. Although the unions were 100% behind the President's hold-the-line order of October and realized the necessity of cooperation and sacrifice, this attitude waned considerably as the machinery of government including OPA, Manpower Commission, NWLB and Congress veered from 'labor's position on equality of sacrifice and stringent price control measures.

The psychological factors weighed as considerably in the minds of labor as did objective factors. These issues followed in rapid succession: tax bill, job freezing, farm bloc pressure, wage freezing (no inequalities adjusted); OPA rationing and price control, UMW strike, and as a result of that the Smith-Connally bill which shall be treated in another section.

There is a high correlation between a strong degree of organizational discipline in a union and its institutional maturity. Discipline is a positive essential if unionism is going to meet the test of opposition and remain intact. Although opposition maturity often implies 'institutionalism', and 'job monopoly' with an atrophy of original

purposes of unionism -- (better working conditions for the under-dog) mature unions, like A.F. of L., are in a better position to command discipline from their locals and thus survive a difficult crisis than the erratic undisciplined locals.

An international union that is able to command discipline from its locals is in a position to make public committments and to inspire confidence in those promises. The best illustration of this was the no-strike committment made by the labor leaders after Pearl Harbor.

Before considering the effectiveness of the pledge, the United Mine Workers' Strike must be mentioned because of its use as a publicity weapon in the press, radio and Congress to distort and discolor the American labor record in the war effort. Without attempting to deal specifically with the miners' grievances, or to justify the strike it must be noted that the strike sounded the 'go ahead' signal on legislation designed to curb and control labor unions. The strike provided the public with dark glasses with which to view organized labor, dark glasses that blurred the shining rays of labor's cooperation in war bond drives, production records, labor management committees, and no-strike records.

How well <u>did</u> labor keep its no-strike pledge? President Roosevelt in discussing the pledge stated, "For

the entire year of 1942 the time lost by strikes averaged only 5/100 of 1% of the total man hours worked." That record indicates, first, that labor generally was in full accord with the 'voluntary' curtailment of union rights during the war emergency; and secondly, labor union leadership was able to control and hold-in-line the more obstreperous elements in the unions demanding strikes. The no-strike record was not perfect but even Ivory Soap is only 99 66/100% pure. Consider such factors as the extremely 'human' emotional element in labor strifes; the adverse publicity given labor unions; the wage case delays and inefficiencies of government bureaus; the rising cost of living; and the unstability and volatility of the defense industry situation with its transportation, housing, and fatigue problems. It then seems amazing that labor has performed such a job. Discipline and great willingness to cooperate in the war effort are the prime factors responsible for this record.

But in regard to internal union organization, how do unions achieve this discipline? Generally speaking, the A.F. of L. unions with morepower delegated to the international wield a tighter control over their locals than the CIO, whose unions share a greater degree of local autonomy. However the CIO is more militant and aggressive in their attitude toward the war, explaining in part their

attitude toward the war, explaining in part their splendid record in production and 'no-strikes'.

A study of The Teamster union from October 1942 until August 1943 gives interesting sidelights on the internal problems of unions -- particularly the important one of discipline.

In the January 1943 issue of the Teamster Tobin wrote an editorial on Obey Laws or Lose Charter. "Any local union or joint council or officer of either body that believes, he can set aside the decisions made by the International Union is foolish.... Defiance of International Laws and decisions is sufficient cause to suspend the local union or the individual within the local union."

"The Associated Transport, Incl signed a five-year agreement designed to prevent strikes and extending the closed shop on all operations of the company in 20 Eastern and Southern states with the International Teamsters. The no-strike provision reads: "It is agreed that all disputes arising out of the interpretation or application of this agreement shall be settled by negotiation between the general president of the union or his duly authorized representative, and the president of the company or his duly authorized representative."[17]

In February Chester M. Wright writes in the Teamster

17 Teamster, October 1942.

on the subject Unions Blundering Into Regulatory Noose. "Most unions and employers seeking temporary advantages from NWLB are not entirely aware of the bureaucratic regulations they are inviting -- a government dictation of labor-management relations which could outlast the war." This statement is an interesting indictment the union practice of relying on government paternalism. This independent attitude is absent from CIO journals who still extol the virtues and past-achievements of Roosvelt and who soft-pedal the dangers involved in shirking collective bargaining responsibility.

The same issue of the Teamster carried this story: "Six members of Local No. 138 in New York City were suspended by their union and fired because of an unauthorized strike against the Sachs Quality Furniture Co.

"Unions must be conducted with the laws made by the general membership and when one or two or three, or a hundred, violate these laws, the International Union is better off without them.

"Above all, observance of laws and decisions laid down by the International Union, whether you like them or not, must obtain."

Continuing in this same vein Tobin in March 1943 calls Strikers enemies of the Nation! In an action of the general executive board of the Teamsters' Union a permit for sym-

pathetic strike action against the Donnelly Printing Co. of Chicago was refused.

The official minutes of the Board read: "Well, the Teamsters have no bitterness against the rank and file of the Printers' Union, -- but we feel they have unlimited presumption and indescribable nerve to ask the Teamsters to break their written, signed contract with their employers in Chicago and engage in a sympathetic strike to help them to organize a printing plant in which they have no members."

'Striking Teamster Expelled from Local No. 404 in Springfield' reads the headline in May 1943 issue. "Both the International Union, and, we think we can venture to sy, the federal government owe a debt of gratitude to the patriotic, law-respecting trade unionists who carry out the orders of the International Union in suspending or expelling members who violate the laws of the International Union and the implicit binding instructions of the general president that no strikes, especially rump or illegal strikes shall take place during the period of the war."

The Executive Board on June 15 expressed itself as "strongly opposed to our people participating in the strikes and lockouts or campaigns of other international unions."[18]

How then did the Smith-Connally Act affect labor? The bill was passed presumably to stop unpatriotic strikes, any

18 Teamster, Aug. 1943.

work shortages, and to teach the unions who really was boss! And what effect will the bill have upon the control and discipline of union leadership?

The June 19 issue of the CIO Union News Service states, "The Smith-Connally bill has been sold to Congress and the public as an anti-strike and anti-Lewis bill. It is neither.

"It was hatched by the administration-baiting political cronies of John L. Lewis, and he furnished the pretext for its passage.

"It is actually designed to provoke strikes, rather than to stop them.

"It will demoralize war production, crippled the War Labor Board, threaten the life of labor unions, and destroy the workers' democratic rights."

Labor, although embittered by the legislative spanking which the bill constituted, continued to pledge its cooperation and support to the war effort. But the willingness came more grudgingly than in January of 1942.

CIO President Murray blasted the anti-war conspiracy in Congress and renewed labor's pledge to continue to give all its strength for victory. "The duty of labor at this time is clear," Murray said. "We will continue to stand firmly behind the Commander-in-Chief and carry forward the fight for complete and speedy victory."[19]

19 CIO Union News Service, June 26.

William Green, president of A F of L, in his letter to Roosevelt after his veto had been over-ridden by Congress said, "The A F of L and all its affiliated unions stand committed to our no-strike pledge for the duration of the war. I am confident that they will live up to this pledge in the future just as they have in the past. In this way the workers of America can render the Connally-Smith Act inoperative and pave the way for its early repeal. In this way the workers of America can best serve their country and the cause of freedom and democracy."[20]

The Teamster of August 1943 said, "Even though the Smith-Connally bill was enacted to curb the defiance of a single union, and even though its provisions are unfair to the great bulk of labor, nevertheless the rest of labor will obey the law as long as it stands.

"However, we will spare no effort to remove that law from the books because we see it for what it is - the first wedge in the postwar economy.

"So far as the Teamsters are concerned our answer to that law and the men who framed it will be continued production, continued purchases of war bonds, and continued donation of blood to the Red Cross. We will not be diverted from our main job, which is to win the war quickly and completely."

An editorial in the July 31 issue of the Union News revealed the complications and trouble-points for labor

20 American Federationist, May 1943.

leaders which the Smith-Connally Bill provoked.

"At the Allis-Chalmers plant in Springfield, Illinois, Lewis' District 50 is attempting to raid the CIO Farm Equipment Workers' Union, which was chosen by the employees in a Labor Board election to represent them and has a contract with the company.

"Lewis has found the Smith-Connally Act just what he needed to provoke a strike directed against the union chosen by the workers and to disrupt war production.

"CIO Pres. Phil Murray in a statement directed to the Allis-Chalmers workers told them that they 'have a grave responsibility to American labor and a solemn duty to American people to perform today, in preventing a vote to strike in their plant.

"Despite all provocations there must be no stoppages of war production in this crucial period."[21]

Labor leaders are now riding the band wagon of no-strikes pleeeeeese! The Act, however, has robbed them of their whip to tame wild horses. All they can do is shout and wait until the smoke clears.

An editorial of August 7 in the Union News clarifies its strike-provoking character. "The disruptive, strike-provoking character of the anti-labor Smith-Connally Act is brought

21 CIO Union News Service, August 7.

home once more by the ruling of Atty. General Biddle that, under its terms, minority groups of employees may call for strike votes.

"Under the Biddle ruling, it may be used even more than was at first thought as a weapon to undermine or raid responsible unions chosen by a majority of the workers, for the benefit of union-busting employers, strike provocateurs, and other would-be disrupters of war production."

In conclusion, it seems fair to state that labor leaders were very effective in securing cooperation and support from the unions on the no-strike pledge, although the compliance with the policy was a dual matter of discipline and a sincere belief on the part of union leaders and workers that sacrifice of the strike weapon was necessary to turn out production sufficient to beat Hitler. However, the Smith-Connally Act by sanctioning minority strikes and making labor leaders responsible for actions of unions is placing labor leaders in a precarious position in regard to discipline. Their hands are tied. They are between the devil - the government - and the deep blue sea - their own unions. Also because of the increasing sniping at labor unions through legislation in the states and Congress and because of the irritation of national issues (which I have outlined in the first section), labor's enthusiasm and incentive are waning.

Whether labor reacts to the 'oppositionists' by failing to cooperate on the production line or by organizing

political opposition to achieve unity in war goals although disunity on the home front - that is a question I cannot decide. The indications are toward the political alternative rather than defeatism and apathy toward the United Nations struggle. This is particularly true of the CIO unions which have always been more politically conscious than A F of L.

On January 15 of last winter, Phil Murray told the special CIO legislative conference that "the job ahead of us is a tremendous job in the legislative field as in other fields. This means keeping representatives in Washington constantly, means constant pressure from the field, constant demands from the home grounds. The job cannot be done merely by letters from the national office of the CIO."[22]

In Youngstown, Ohio, the Mahoning Valley Industrial Union Council was reported to be "getting set to take an active part in politics." The "Bulletin," a new mimeographed publication of the council, helps keep union members informed about activities in the city. Backing this up, the council passed a resolution calling on affiliated locals to appoint members of a legislative committee, which will attend all meetings of the City Council, County Commissioners, and Board of Education.[23]

22 CIO Union News Service, August 7.
23 Ibid., February 12.

The Union News of February 12 stated that reports coming into the CIO national office from state affiliates showed increasing activity on legislative action in the assemblies. Tennessee, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Maryland were cited.[24]

The Smith-Hoffman bills denying the unions the right to political activity were strongly resented by the labor unions. Philip Porter, WAW-CIO representative, told the House Judiciary Committee, "These bills are basically undemocratic and anti-American!"[25]

The July 17 issue of the Union News carried this political tid-bit. "Fast work on CIO's political action campaign is seen in the first of a series of regional conferences set for today in Philadelphia to explore means of involving labor and all progressive groups in work looking to 1944.

"The committee is under the chairmanship of Sidney Hillman, president, Amalgamated Clothing Workers, with R. J. Thomas, president UAW-CIO, as secretary and Sherman H. Dalrymple of the Rubber Workers, and Albert Fitzgerald of the United Electrical Workers as members."

More political sentiment was shown by the National United Labor League conference which expressed disapproval of a third party. It overwhelmingly declared that "united labor action should not take the form of a third party at

24 CIO Union News Service, February 12.
24 Ibid., May 22.

this time. For even apart from the technical problems of placing a third party on the ballot nationally in 1944, such a party would today only serve to divide and divert the labor and progressive forces from our main task - unity for the election of progressive win-the-war candidates who fully support our commander-in-chief regardless of party affiliation."[26]

More recently, September 4, the United Auto Workers at their national convention in Milwaukee declared themselves for a fourth term for Roosevelt, an indication of the support he is able to rally from the large CIO unions.

Exactly which way the unions are turning politically it is difficult to decipher at this time. The trend seems to be more aggressive pressure on state legislatures and Congress; political education in the A F of L and CIO journals by advising members to vote for this candidate or protest that bill; no third party endorsement; and support of Roosevelt for fourth term although labor is dubious about 'intentions' of the present Democratic party.

The defeat of progressive men in the last fall elections and the legislative turn of events has spurred labor to a new political consciousness. However, as yet most of labor is unprepared to either discard the theory of 'Roosevelt-

26 CIO Union News Service, July 26.

the-Defender-of-the-Faith' or to renounce the Gompers' technique of political bargaining. Although the old tactics and theories seem insufficient in the face of the encroaching winter, labor can not find any suitable alternative. The CIO's reliance on New Deal paternalism during the 30's has made them politically blind. For that reason the A F of L is in a better position to view the facts as they exist, although, I believe, organizationally and ideologically they are less prepared to be the vanguard of a political struggle.

If the gathering storm against labor and progressivism increases in fury both the CIO and A F of L will have to evaluate and reconstruct their educational-political programs. This will be extremely necessary if the 'falacy of numbers' is to be invalidated, and if the unions are to be an effective calculable political factor in the coming struggle for 'liberalism and democracy' against 'bureaucratic collectivism.'[27]

In my judgment the leadership of CIO labor unions and some A F of L unions is excellent. If a criticism were to be made, I would suggest that labor leaders' greatest blow as leaders for a future political fight is their political illusions and confusion.

27 Douglas McDonald, Partisan Review, September, 1943.

Yet, that weakness is paralleled in the entire liberal forces. Labor is not alone in that respect.

Another factor that I foresee has potential danger is the aimless, hand-to-mouth method which unions pursue in regard to their course, general direction. Granting the difficulty of selling unionism to a worker except on immediate claims of job interest (wages and hours), I maintain that the leadership should be more intelligently aware of its ends. Obviously many unions are not and will not be content with only the existing collective bargaining machinery as its raison d'etre. Then where are they going and why? The Reuter plan was an eye-opener, and labor responded. Perhaps more blue printing of the labor union future would clarify and inspire many of the local union leaders to intelligent and concrete action.

To complete this study some mention should be made of jurisdictional factionalism as a dangerous deterrent to solidarity in the labor movement. The old CIO -A F of L rivalry is still a present threat although the war and necessity of closer collaboration among union leadership has brought about more of an amicable understanding between the two organizations. The A F of L is jealous of the strategic positions which the CIO holds in war industries and resents the lower initiation fees and union dues of the CIO which that group uses to attract new members. An evidence of the

rivalry is the case of the Kaiser shipyards where a CIO union gained control of a former A F of L. union.

In the official minutes of the Teamsters it stated: "The next matter to be taken up was a request or assessment on the International Union by the Metal Trades Department of the A F of L for $1500 in order to help carry on the fight being made by that department in the Kaiser shipyards to hold the members which they have obtained in the various A F of L unions."[28] As a nonpartisan I would tend to question the validity of such an organizational expense in wartime. It seems a dissipation of funds when there are so many other vital needs to be met.

Joe Padway, general counsel for the case of Kaiser plant stated, "Even assuming a technical violation of the Act which we deny -- common sense and fairness should have dictated a decision not to impair the production records of the Kaiser shipbuilding yards by disturbing and upsetting labor relations that have proved satisfactory under severe tests."[29]

Obviously no great love is lost between the two groups. Typical of union rivalry behavior was the action of the Teamsters who cancelled their agreement with the International Association of Machinists when they withdrew from A F of L (and for very legitimate reasons).

28 Teamster, March 1943.
29 Machinists' Journal, February 1943.

The American Federation of Labor, the orthodox catholic group of labor, is now challenged with the issue of taking Lewis and his miners into her varied household. The A F of L are prompted on the one hand to affect a consolidation of labor and their own union, and on the other hand they fear Lewis' tactics, his ubiquitous District 50, and the opposition from their own Progressive Miners, a small contingent but a convenient mouthpiece, for A F of L leaders.

Tobin in the July 1943 Teamster favors return of miners, or the CIO to solidify labor. Lester Hunt in the same issue states, "It will have to be clearly understood that the A F of L will not admit the Miners on their own terms but on the terms laid down by the conventions of the AF of L.

"Therefore the United Mine Workers must get rid of their former truck drivers and other classes of workers covered by the charters of other international unions in the A F of L."

The Progressive Miner stated, "Aspiration of John L. Lewis to take his United Mine Workers back into the fold of the A F of L. apparently was dealt a death blow when the A F of L Executive Council on August 11 voted to submit, without recommendation, his application for readmission to the annual convention of the Federation which opens October 4 at Boston, Mass.

"The present application of the UMW of A is an applica-

tion for the same jurisdiction as now held by the Progressive Mine Workers of America. To grant this application would constitute a clear trespass on the jurisdiction now held by us by virtue of our charter granted by this Executive Council, as the language of Section 11 is clear and positive, and the PMWA has not and will not consent in writing or otherwise to the granting of a charter to the UMAW, which would in any way infringe upon the jurisdiction now validly, rightfully and completely held by our organization."

Another article in the issue of the Progressive Miner denounced the UMAW as dictatorial and dishonest. "It is the old story of rule or ruin with John L. Lewis and it has actually been rule and ruin because Lewis has ruined and will ruin any labor organization he has been in and if reaffiliated with the A F of L, he'll again, when the occasion suits him, attempt to ruin it."

These quotations give a cursory glance at the type of problem involved in jurisdictional rivalries although I do not believe it would be wise to overemphasize the role of these rivalries in the total labor union picture. The war situation, as I have said, has minimized A F of L and CIO battles. (In January the CIO Executive Board ratified an agreement for the arbitration of jurisdictional differences between the CIO and A F of L.) but fresh antagonism has been vested on Lewis who brought down the wrath of the public on labors' collective head. He is not well-loved, and his

more recent thrusts into established unions with his District 50 have been resented bitterly.

In the future the labor movement cannot afford to have the opposition use their factionalism as a wedge to play the groups against each other. Such organizational rivalry could be indulged in during the hey-dey of the 30's when competition was perhaps even healthy, but today such tactics are sheer luxury. The union leadership recognizes the need for solidarity but like so many of us, is afraid to compromise for fear of conceding a point to other fellow. Undoubtedly the great bloc to CIO-A F of L cooperation is the unwillingness of A F of L to associate. The situation is almost parallel to the situation of the Catholic 'Church' and the numerous protestant 'sects'. To be realistic, it would probably be more sensible for A F of L unions to recognize the CIO as a 'fait accompli' rather than a heretic or prodigal son. Agreeing to disagree may be the lesser of two evils!

CONCLUSION

And how do unions stack up on their degree of staying power as judged by my criteria? First, I scored them on quality of leadership which on basis of discipline, militancy, program formulation, and political consciousness has been good. The A F of L national leadership seems to be less militant, less democratic and more inclined to be the

the office-holder type than the CIO leadership, though that is only an inference, I make from scanty readings on the A F of L.

In the future the Smith-Connally Act is apt to weaken the leaders' position on matters of discipline so that a responsible leadership may be undermined by factionalism and malcontents.

The leadership of the locals is also in need of more intellectual direction if they are going to keep the union ship chartered on a course. The time of adolescence is passing and I believe that a reevaluation of ends and means might be very fruitful for the leaders and their unions.

2. The degree of political wisdom evinced by unions is contingent on type of leadership. Previously I mentioned that CIO union leaders were blinded by the support of the New Deal and could not discard the illusion of Roosevelt-Defender-of-their-Faith. The A F of L was in a better position to act independently but this union is less capable of leading a fight. In the political arena the unions are discovering that bargaining with the political parties is not adequate, yet they fear a third party. Whether the Unions can capture control of a party or get their demands from political bargaining is a question that the future must decide.

Certainly the unions must launch a more effective political education program within their shops if they are to

effect any change in the elections. Although the leadership is largely politically conscious, the union-members-at-large are inarticulate, and uninformed.

3. If the unions are independent they are in a better fighting position than when shackled by governmental ties. On this score the condition of unions is unfortunate. Recent legislation in many states has curbed their power in political activity, weakened the position of their leadership, and infringed on union rights -- strike, picket line and internal organization. Congress also by the Smith-Connally Act has interfered with the independent status of unions by annulling the unions' voluntary no-strike committment.

Although there are outside interferences with the Unions independence, some of the unions are foolishly entangling themselves with regulatory nooses, by relying on the national War Labor Board to settle cases that rightfully and formerly belonged to the collective bargaining machinery. Unions must avoid at all costs the danger of allowing government bureaus to settle these problems if they are to remain independent.

4. Organizational maturity is a problem of an optimum point when used as one criteria for measuring strength of staying power of unions. Young unions who are still imbued with the fighting organizational spirit are often incapable of solidifying the group for a fight along political lines. Their militancy must be tempered with astute organization

strategy, political literarcy in the membership and solidarity and discipline within the union. The CIO unions are emerging from the youthful stage but their membership is probably not sufficiently cohesive or alert to guarantee that they can hold their own against strong opposition. As evidence of their maturity a union must have recognition in the public as an accepted part of the economy, which implies the union is willing to cooperate within that context. The United States is not as fortunate in that respect as Great Britain where trade unions are accepted as the natural course of events, and a desirable one.

The increasing number of labor-management committees, and the soft pedaling of 'labor vs. capitalist' philosophy is evidence that labor is trying to come of age. However, at this point the public is hindering unions from achieving this manhood and consequently may force the unions to regressive tendencies.

The A F of L, although more mature, and more an accepted part of private enterprise, has perhaps passed the optimum point of maturity and shows signs of senility and debility. Unions that are too much 'institution', and too little militancy might face the fate of the strong mature German unions in 1933. A fear of change and an incapacity for action is fuel for the opposition. A F of L conventions in Miami, plush-chairs and a graft psychology will never rouse the workers from their inaction and indifference.

A point somewhere between the A F of L and CIO would be the optimum point of organizational maturity.

5. Jurisdictional rivalry is a deterrent to solidarity and united front. Yet if labor is wise, the differences will be forgotten and their similarities stressed. Already action has been taken in this direction in the past year. Let us hope they may learn a lesson from history and now allow traditional jealousies and differences bring them to the dilemma of the social-democrats, socialists and communists in Germany who were more afraid of each other than Hitler.

Can labor survive the coming winter of reaction? Although it is difficult to predict the duration and strength of the storm of reaction, labor must avoid being too optimistic and must prepare for the 'winter'. The factors I have outlined above give some indication of labor's resistance power. Let us hope it can weather the storm!